constantly bombarded with every kind of luring advertisement for all kinds of worldly goods and worldly vice. Pounded with images daily, our consciences are continually put on trial, as we must stand firm in the strong wind of worldly pleasures and vices which assault our sensitivities and desires, constantly pushing us and luring us to find our satisfaction in worldly goods and pleasures, rather than in Christ alone. This is seen most clearly in the decline of morality in the broadcast airwaves of radio, television, internet and movies. As the sense of public morality declines further and further, we are bombarded with more and more wickedness and are desensitized by the continual bombardment of immoral images and sound bites, and our innate desire for pleasure and materialism is tried to the maximum by the lure of affluence and worldly pleasures which are seemingly within our reach. Worse yet, we can live in the fantasy of these things by way of experience on the screen, and our hearts and minds are drug through the dirt of worldly vice, all while we sit in the comfort of our own home. Pornography is within the reach of every man and woman so that sexual desire can be inflamed without actually engaging in the physical sin, but the wretched sin of intent kills the inner man like cancer. Movies and television portray sin in a glorified manner that causes even the most discerning of Christians to be led astray for the moment into thoughts of wickedness, and our consciences become desensitized and numbed to the serious offense that sin should be to us. All manner of sin is portrayed in such a luring and enticing way as to entertain us with all the special effects and sound quality and drama of storyline that has been pushed to the seeming limits of emotional experience. Therefore as the decline of morality in our culture descends further and further, we must abstain ourselves from the indulgence into the world’s lusts and desires, in an effort to keep our hearts pure and our consciences sensitive to God’s purity for “God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.” Let us therefore be very careful how we live, using wisdom in the things we engage in and let us with the Psalmist long for God’s holiness in all our ways.

Psalm 101:2-4 - 2 I will give heed to the blameless way. When wilt Thou come to me? 3 I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. 4 A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil. NASB

B. 8 So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you - Here Paul makes it clear again that the prohibition of sexual immorality comes from God. It is “God’s will that you abstain.” Therefore if you reject that command, you are rejecting God. Here see that disobedience to God’s commands is a sin against Him, not just some Law as Paul states “he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God.” Not only this but you sin against the God who is abiding in you by His Spirit, who’s presence continues in your soul. This is a grievous matter indeed. Elsewhere in the New Testament Paul teaches us that we are one with the Lord and sexual immorality is like joining God to those with whom we engage in sexual sin with. We are to consider our bodies as the sacred temple where God’s Spirit dwells and it is therefore to be a place of purity and sanctification.

1 Corinthians 6:15-20 - 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! 16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, “The two will become one flesh.” 17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. 18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. NASB

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 - 9 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; 10 For indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel in all these things, adding to your earnest efforts. 11 For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience that God is straightening out our hearts toward Him. 12 Therefore we are confident and would like to repeat that we are free from envy and agitation for the reason our souls are set for the life to come. NASB
still more, 11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, 12 so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need. NASU

A. 9 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; 10 for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more – The word here translated “love of the brethren” is in fact the one Greek word philadelphia meaning brotherly love. It is that special love that exists between Christians and it is this love that Paul tells the Thessalonians that “you have no need for anyone to write to you.” By this Paul means to say that as he has written and instructed them on many things, but on this matter, he need not do so “for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.” His point is that they are already accomplished in this area of Christian life and he points this out when he says, “for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia.” Obviously, they were actively meeting the needs of others in the surrounding province and exercising love to such degree that it was well known. So they have learned from God in this matter of brotherly love and are now practicing it, yet Paul exhorts them to further growth stating, “But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more.” As it is with all virtue, Christians are to always and continually be striving to excel so that their life becomes one of a constant display of Christ’s character and virtue. This is the second time in this chapter (see verse 1), that Paul has commended them for their godliness and yet on both accounts says “we urge you, brethren, to excel still more.” Let us mark this idea well, that no matter how far we come as Christians, let us continue to pursue that upward call of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

B. 11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, 12 so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need – Here Paul instructs them as to there conduct in daily life and interaction with others, including unbelievers. When he says “to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business” he refers to that good conduct of a Christian whereby they avoid meddling in the affairs of others and submissively follow the laws of society, being at peace with all men. Barnes comments “Orderly, peaceful; living in the practice of the calm virtues of life. The duty to which he would exhort them was that of being subordinate to the laws; of avoiding all tumult and disorder; of calmly pursuing their regular avocations, and of keeping themselves from all the assemblages of the idle, the restless, and the dissatisfied. No Christian should be engaged in a mob; none should be identified with the popular excitements which lead to disorder and to the disregard of the laws.” To this “quiet life” Paul adds that they should “work with your hands, just as we commanded you, 12 so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.” Here he reminds them of a command he had earlier given, that they should “work with their hands.” By this he means work in gainful employment so that they are able to provide for themselves and not be a burden on others who are so dutifully employed. This has long been a Christian standard. Christians are not to be bums, living off the hard work of others, but rather those who work hard and earn their own living and provide for the needs of others as well.

Ephesians 4:28 - 28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. NASB Christians are to live a disciplined life of hard work that produces an abundance. They are not to go about life meddling in the affairs of others, as gossips or busybodies, but rather to “mind their own business and work with their hands” in order to have something to share with the needy.

2 Thessalonians 3:11-12 - 11 For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. 12 Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. NASB